



# OPEN LETTER TO THE PREMIER OF ONTARIO, MINISTER OF THE ENVIRONMENT, AND MINISTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND FORESTRY: REGARDING OPPOSITION TO TURBINE PROLIFERATION AT ONE OF CANADA'S TOP TEN ENDANGERED PLACES, AMHERST ISLAND

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“SO, I ASK, WHO AMONG YOU WILL BE THE FIRST TO ADMIT THAT THE RISK TO FRESH WATER DESTRUCTION ON AI POSES AN UNDEFINED THREAT TO HUMAN HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT? THE RATE OF SPREAD THROUGH GROUND WATER CANNOT BE DETERMINED, AND ONCE DONE, **CANNOT BE MITIGATED**. WHO AMONG YOU IS WILLING TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE POTENTIAL HUMAN HARM, AND IN THE CASE OF WILDLIFE, LIFE ENDING DEVASTATION PROPOSED FOR AI?”

## From Great Lakes Wind Truth, USA and Canada

September 26, 2015

Premier Kathleen Wynne

Honorable Glen Murray, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change

Honorable Bill Mauro, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry



(Delivered by email)

Good Morning All,

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the desecration of Amherst Island with even one industrial wind turbine. No one would deny that Amherst Island (AI) has already been challenged by human effects. Few, if any, places on earth have not been, either directly or indirectly. And unfortunately, our human effects have largely been destructive. In recent decades, however, there has been an awakening of sorts by environmental scientists that has spread to the masses regarding the seriousness of, and in many aspects, the irreversible damage we are causing that is altering the balance and health of our ecosystem. Adding to this, the validity of the environmental filth resulting from the manufacturing, transporting, placement, and subsequent environmental ruination associated with industrial wind turbines is becoming increasingly accepted worldwide. Wind developers are, therefore, scrambling to reap as much financial benefit from governments and municipalities as they can before the plug is pulled on this scam industry. AI is now proposed to become one more victim of this insanity.

Having read volumes regarding the ecological diversity and abundance of avian, mammal and amphibian species, the grassland



bird habitat, the wetlands that enrich AI, it explains the widespread opposition to the Windlectric Inc. project by respected environmental groups including Nature Canada, Ontario Nature, Kingston Field Naturalists and American Bird Conservancy. I will not reiterate the well founded, indisputable information regarding waterfowl stopover and staging areas, waterfowl nesting areas, a land bird migratory stopover area, migratory butterfly stopover areas, turtle wintering areas, amphibian breeding and habitat areas, marsh breeding bird habitat, including the many threatened and endangered species known to AI. Their crucial role in the biodiversity of the entire Great Lakes is well established. This is well known to you, but for some unknown reason, has not caused you to voice a unanimous, resounding NO to this hideous project. As if this is not enough, there is much more to consider.

### **Effects on Water Supplies, Watershed, Lake Ontario by Mercury and Concrete:**

Amherst Island (AI) is home to 400 hectares, or about 988 acres of wetlands. International efforts between Canada and the U.S. are now underway to restore coastal wetlands. Further, for those living on AI, all potable water comes from wells. This is crucial information for several reasons. The one I want to focus on pertains to concrete, the product that is used for turbine foundations. It has been reported that Windlectric Inc., if this project is allowed to be built, plans to build a



concrete “factory” on AI to produce the thousands of tons of concrete they will need. Here in the U.S., the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reported that the mercury emissions from concrete production results in “poisoned fish, polluted air and waters, and increased risks to our health”. **It is a known neurotoxin that does NOT decompose in dirt and water. The EPA further states that “1/70<sup>th</sup> of a teaspoon of mercury can contaminate about twenty acres of a lake”. Concrete *production* is just the beginning.**

Without exact information regarding how much concrete Windlectric Inc. is planning to pour into AI for each turbine, or exactly how deep and wide each excavated site will be, I looked at other wind projects for estimates, which vary widely. Here in the U.S., Blue Creek Wind Farm in Ohio reported using about 198 tons of concrete poured into 20 foot deep pits for each 328 foot tall turbine. The Next Era website proudly claims to use 800 metric tons (881 U.S. tons) for each turbine they construct! That is an alarming FOUR TIMES that of the Blue Creek Wind Farm! Once approved, Windlectric Inc. can pour as much as they determine necessary into the bowels of AI!

So, what are the risks to humans and wildlife once it is poured into the ground? Concrete contains limestone, calcium, aluminum, silicon, and a lot of water (Where would the water come from?). The pH of concrete is 12, nearly the same as Drano and ammonia! The safe pH of drinking water is 6.5! Again quoting the EPA, waste water from



concrete is “caustic and corrosive”. Quoting the Site Management of Concrete Wash Water website, **“Water that comes in contact with cement, uncured concrete, concrete dust, etc, quickly produces chemical burns to fish, insects and plants. If even a small amount of concrete waste water is allowed to enter streams, lakes, wetlands or harbors through the storm water system, it can cause immense damage to the environment”**. The site also states that 100,000 liters of water is required to dilute just 1 liter of water with a pH of 12!

Once concrete is poured, it starts to harden, but how does one determine how much of the water in fresh concrete is absorbed into and contaminates the ground before hardening? The composition, water content, and presence of aquifers and wells in the ground it is poured into determines part of the answer. On AI, “a vulnerable watershed that must be protected”, some wells are reported to be just under 5 meters deep (only sixteen feet), while large turbine foundations are typically up to or deeper than 100 meters in pits 95-100 meters in diameter! On a small island with drinking water in some wells only 5 meters deep, with 800 hectares of wetland, and groundwater that ends up in wells and in Lake Ontario, how can anyone deny the incredibly high risk this proposal exposes for every living thing that lives on, migrates through, grows on and swims within and near AI? In fact, the Trow Report by Trow Associates in 2007



stated that “Amherst Island exhibits moderate to high to very high” sensitivity to, or risk of, pollution to its ground water. *That risk doesn’t even take into consideration the production and pouring of THOUSANDS OF TONS OF FRESH CONCRETE!*

So, I ask, who among you will be the first to admit that the risk to fresh water destruction on AI poses an undefined threat to human health and the environment? The rate of spread through ground water cannot be determined, and once done, **CANNOT BE MITIGATED**. Who among you is willing to take responsibility for the potential human harm, and in the case of wildlife, life ending devastation proposed for AI? I have to believe that at least one of you, the Honorable Bill Mauro, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, will stand up for the protection of this island that is ranked second in biodiversity significance among the 119 islands in Lake Ontario’s northeast coast, as he did when Thunder Bay, his home region, was under attack by the wind industry. The damage to AI would be far reaching in comparison.

I respectfully beseech each of you to defend the health and safety of all who inhabit Amherst Island, to avoid the human illness and wildlife death that will clearly be the future of Amherst Island if this project is allowed to materialize. The future of this precious sanctuary is in your hands.



*Great Lakes Wind Truth, USA and Canada*

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Kind Regards,

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